

EIR: 202400422000

I hereby request under the Freedom of information Act and EIR regulations the following regards the above report issued by former Minister Harvie ;

Question 1:

The above said report states that: "During 2022 2023, the Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme has made awards of £30Million to 33 projects across publicly owned buildings for retrofit heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects, and £18Million to 10 projects this financial year (as of September 2023)". What are the addresses and the relevant public body responsible for each of the 33 projects and each of the 10 projects.

Response:

Please see attached table 'Annex B' which answers the above questions.

It should be noted that 32 projects received capital funding in 2022-23. The figure of 33 projects was reported incorrectly. Furthermore, the number of projects funded as of September 2023 decreased by one as compared to the report referred to above, as one organisation was unable to continue with their project. This brings the total projects supported as of September 2023 to 9.

Question 2:

In each case state the valuation of each property carried out before the works were started.

Response:

Under the terms of the exception at regulation 10(4)(a) of the EIRs (information not held), the Scottish Government is not required to provide information which it does not have. The Scottish Government does not have the information you have requested because this question is not included through the application process. The individual organisations supported through the scheme may hold the information you are looking for.

Question 3:

In each case state whether the Minister or yourself considered whether the project constituted value for money in terms of the Scottish Finance Manual and other rules governing use of public cash.

Response:

Accountable Officers have responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of regularity, propriety and value for money are met. Within the Scottish Government the AO responsibility for the Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant scheme sits with the Director-General Net Zero.

The Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) provides for delegation of approval. As such, approval for projects under the Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant scheme has been delegated to the relevant senior executive, in this case it is currently the Deputy Director Heat in Buildings Delivery.

As part of their role in line with the SPFM they are required to ensure the grant programme is delivered in line with principles for issuing grants, as well as value for money principles and the Best Value Framework, which includes both Value for Money and Sustainability as themes.

The Scottish Public Finance Manual defines how value for money should be considered including the processes under which the organisation's procurement, projects, and processes are systematically evaluated and assessed to provide confidence about suitability, effectiveness, productivity, quality, value and avoidance of error and other waste. Each grant application is assessed on its individual merits against a number of considerations including:

- appropriate contribution to Scotland's Net Zero Targets
- installing a Zero Direct Emission Heating System
- achieving net zero emissions
- reducing energy use (kWh) and costs (£)
- measures to reduce peak electricity demand, or mitigate increases caused by heat electrification

In addition, organisations applying for grant funding must demonstrate the strategic business need for the building(s) which they propose to retrofit. Applications should also demonstrate how the proposed measures represent a strategic, whole-building approach. Applications for grant must set out the project costs including £ cost per square metre and £ cost per tonne of CO2 equivalent (over the blended lifetime of measures).

Each grant application is reviewed and assessed by a panel, including organisations such as Zero Waste Scotland, the Scottish Futures Trust and the Scottish Government. In assessing each application the panel use their technical and professional judgement to assess the projects against each of the scheme criteria. Where costs appear higher than would be expected the panel seek further evidence from the applicant and also take into account issues such as whether the building is hard to treat and the level of innovation being demonstrated by the project.

Question 4:

In each case state (a) the estimated and (b) the actual total costs of the works carried out.

Please see attached table 'Annex B' which answers the above question through the provision of costs provided to Scottish Government in Column E. Scottish Government are provided with costs of the project, and grant awards are made on that basis. The overall costs of the project to Grantees may be higher than this if additional costs outside the scope of the project are incurred.